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A.-J. GABRIEL, BY LEMOYNE. (MUSÉE DU LOUVRE.)

ANGE-JACQUES GABRIEL

(1698-1782)

BY H. BARTLE COX



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BY H. BARTLE COX

UNIVERSALLY acclaimed as one of the greatest architects of any country, Ange-Jacques Gabriel was the eighteenth-century product of the traditional school in France.

Our royal "protégé," who was born during the reign of Louis XIV. and died during the reign of Louis XVI., was the official *Premier Architecte de Louis XV.* The Bourbon school of architecture reached its climax in, and died with, Gabriel.

A study of the works accredited to this "Maître-Architecte" reveal at least four phases :—

1. Common-sense barrack-like builder's construction, such as we see in the "Bourse de Bordeaux" (Plate 1), and which we might call his *Louis XIV. manner*.
2. *Louis XV. decorative phase*, exemplified in parts of the Palace of Versailles and in the Pavillon Français (Plates 2 and 3), showing fantastic but graceful ornamentation.
3. Elegantly proportioned architecture with refined details, viz., *the so-called Louis XVI. style*, characteristic of the best work of the period ; see all the plates except those just mentioned and the two illustrative of his last phase.
4. *The precursive Empire phase* seen in his later additions to the Petit Trianon (Plates 33 and 34).

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From which it appears reasonable to conclude that had Gabriel lived earlier or later his style or styles would have borne the stamp of the trend or trends of different ideals.

For stylistic purposes the third or principal phase of Gabriel is generally associated with the name of Louis XVI., yet Gabriel retired during the first year of the reign of this monarch. Gabriel lived, to use the words of Frederick the Great, under a "*Régime du Cotillon*." The inseparable personality and real ruler during the active part of the fifty-nine years' reign of the bigoted and libidinous Louis XV. was his intriguing and refined official mistress, Madame de Pompadour, who, fortunately, was a fervent disciple of classicism. She was the prime mover in most of the building schemes, and personally conferred with Gabriel, whose works modern critics recognise contain in their main lines the masculinity of the Louis XIV. epoch, and in its ornamentation the delicious effeminacy of the Louis XV. style.

Owing to Gabriel's sobriety and dislike for the extravagant caprice of the Rococo period, so rife during a part of the reign of Louis XV., his style has acquired the name of Louis XVI., but dynastically all his work belongs to the period of Louis XV.

More happy with an "Ermitage" than with an "École de Guerre," Gabriel was perhaps the most versatile "Boudoir" architect the world has ever known.

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His chief works were carried out when he was an old man. His antecedents as a student are by no means brilliant, but he had birth and protection. Gabriel's technical education appears to have been confined to his work in collaboration with his father and to his connections with the great architects Mansard and Robert de Cotte, to whom he was connected by family ties. Gabriel never won the Grand Prix, and never studied in Rome. At the age of thirty he became a member of the "Académie royale d'architecture." When forty-four years of age he succeeded to his father as "Contrôleur général des Bâtiments du Roi," but what is more noticeable is the fact that in 1743 he was nominated "Directeur de l'Académie Royale d'Architecture," also in succession to his father, and this, a good quarter of a century before the realisation of any of his important works. The royal procedure (explained farther on) in connection with the competition for the decoration of the "Place de la Concorde," shows what a vast difference there was in the methods of his time and in those of ours. They may have been better, at any rate the results were good but the tradition is dead. If effective training is largely a matter of environment or atmosphere, then if we want a modern ghost of Gabriel we must recreate the atmosphere in which he thrived, viz., the whole of the eighteenth-century machinery. He was born in 1698, attained to the ripe age of eighty-four, dying in 1782. He resigned his post when about seventy-seven years of age, and was

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succeeded by Richard Mique, a Lorrain "protégé" of Marie Antoinette, whose favour cost him his head.

It is of great importance to note that Gabriel is descended from a long line of architects of the same name. He is the sixth in order, all of whom had the Christian name of *Jacques*. They all descended from Jacques (1) Gabriel, architect, living at Argentan in 1600, and who died before 1628. The father of the man whose life we are considering was *Jacques Jules* Gabriel, an architect who attained to the highest position. He worked at Paris, but chiefly in the provinces, at Rennes, Bordeaux, Blois, Orléans, Dijon, etc. In 1716 he became first engineer of roads and bridges. He constructed the Pont Royal at Paris, and was entrusted with works at the Manufacture des Gobelins and at the Château de Versailles. He also built the Château de Choisy (now destroyed) for Mademoiselle de Montpensier. He was only twenty years of age at the death of his father (a builder-architect) when he bought from the widow of Michel Hardouin, brother of Jules Hardouin Mansard, the office of "Contrôleur général des bâtiments du Roi." It is supposed that his artistic education was directed by his maternal cousin, Jules Hardouin Mansard, and perhaps by Robert de Cotte, with whom he eventually collaborated and then succeeded him. He appears to have been more of an engineer than an architect, as we understand the term to-day. Mariette says, in *L'Architecture Française* (published in the eighteenth century), that, although he had

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much experience in construction, he was incapable of drawing the least ornamental detail. It might be said that his rôle in the history of French architecture was to spread in the provinces, and to transmit to his son Ange, the teachings of Mansard.

Jacques-Jules Gabriel received many distinctions, and was raised to the peerage. Within the space of three years, Jacques Gabriel is the third relation of Jules Hardouin Mansard to receive from Louis XIV. marks of distinction; the two others are Robert de Cotte, his brother-in-law, and Jacques Desjardins, Contrôleur des bâtiments; his nephew, Jacques Jules Gabriel thus becomes "Écuyer, Seigneur de Mézières, Bernay et autres lieux," and arrives at the position of "Directeur de l'Académie Royale d'Architecture" in 1736.

In those days tradition was firmly established, and the artistic results fairly sure. Louis XIV. positively declares that it is not only the personal merit of Gabriel (v.) that the King wishes to recompense, but it is the descendant of a long line of architects and the relation of Mansard that he wishes to honour.

Ange-Jacques Gabriel married in 1728 Catherine Angélique de la Motte. They had three children, of whom one was Ange Antoine (1735-1781). He became "architecte du roi," but not being appreciated, he was asked to resign when his father gave up office. He was the seventh Gabriel

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in succession, but he died a year before his father. Gabriel's wife was the daughter of the first secretary to the Duc d'Antin, "Directeur général des Bâtiments," from which we see another social tie of importance.

The age made the man, not the man the age. One of the most celebrated architects of the eighteenth century, N. M. Petain, who designed the church of St Germain en Laye, was Prix de Rome, 1738. He travelled extensively in Italy, made serious studies of St Peter's, and measured drawings of the principal theatres of the country. On his return, after eight years (being blocked on the frontiers by the Spanish and Austrian armies), he was nominated "architecte du roi et contrôleur général des bâtiments de Fontainebleau." He then became the head man in the office of Gabriel, and directed for him the works of the Place de la Concorde.

When Gabriel carried out the École Militaire at Paris, he was assisted by his son, Ange Antoine, and by a big staff of draughtsmen, among whom were Victor Louis, the future architect of the famous theatre at Bordeaux and of the well-known "Théâtre Français." The celebrated architect, Brongniart, author of the Palais de la Bourse at Paris, was also in his office, and conducted much of the work for the École Militaire, and then succeeded Gabriel as "Architecte en Chef."

Most of the sculpture and decoration for the Opera by Gabriel on the foundations of Mansard at the Palace of

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Versailles was designed and carried out by Pajou, considered to be the best decorator of his time (Plates 23 and 24).

Gabriel may have exercised a happy influence over his collaborators, but without them he was nothing. We know that he had the monopoly for nearly all the big building schemes of the period, and from the above we see that the aristocratic Gabriel was not lacking in first-rate assistance. "Le Style Gabriel" is therefore a group-development of "Le Style Louis XIV.," with a purification of Louis XV. decoration, and going by the name of "Le Style Louis XVI."

The few existing drawings said to be by Gabriel are, from a modern point of view, for the most part, of little value as drawings; the design, however, is there, but from a draughtsman's attitude, pure and simple, the majority are frankly bad. Some bear his signature (Plates 1, 25), but it is difficult to say whether they were actually executed by him or were merely the work of his office. Compare signature with drawing on Plate 25. Good or bad, they served their purpose admirably, as the architecture of Gabriel testifies. In a few a connoisseur can detect the hand of a very experienced artist. The best drawings from the ateliers of Gabriel, and bearing his signature, are preserved at the "Archives Nationale" and at the "Cabinet des Estampes"—studies executed as a means to an end; in some of these one feels the highly sensitive and delicate nature of the person who did them; whom that artist may have been

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is now difficult to assert. It is known from accounts or bills for royal buildings that expensive models in wood or plaster, with painted or gilded decorations, were greatly used, but these have all disappeared.

Gabriel's work was not a one-man show, but the work of a nation and of an age—not ours! That it is characterised by elegance is not to be wondered at, for it will be remembered that the court life of France at that time was remarkable both for grace and ease, to a degree that no other country, antique or modern, has ever attained. It was the time of the writers Voltaire, Montesquieu, the painters Quentin de La Tour, François Boucher, the sculptors Bouchardon, Lemoyne. And, let it be said, of many financial blunders and powdered wigs.

The architecture of Gabriel as we see it to-day—still very fine—has lost much of its original “cachet” by subsequent additions and alterations consequent on changed environment.

La Place Louis XV. (Plates 4 to 9). To understand this magnificent embellishment of the French capital, undoubtedly the most precious piece of *Civic Decoration* ever designed, still retaining something of its original conception, it is necessary to have a slight acquaintance with its history.

When the tiresome Louis XIV. died, the court rejoiced in a feeling of relief and hailed his great grandson as king,

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who came to the throne at the age of five. The young Louis XV. grew into a handsome youth and was soon popularly known as "le roi bien aimé." In 1748, after he recovered from an illness, the Mayor and Town Council of Paris submitted to his Majesty the project of erecting to his august person a monumental statue to eternalise the remembrance of popular love. A competition was held for the selection of a suitable site. Sixty schemes were forthcoming, some of which were highly fantastic. Most demanded vast demolitions, consequently none of them were accepted, but finally the "Esplanade du Pont Tournant," now the "*Place de la Concorde*," was decided upon. The next thing was to decorate the "Place." Another competition was held, twenty-eight projects were presented. Gabriel was one of the architects who competed, but among the twenty-seven others we note the most eminent names of the day, such as Blondel, Boffrand, de Lassurance, Soufflot, and besides the academicians, Destouches and Servandoni. None of the compositions, some of which were very good, gave entire satisfaction. According to the Ministerial report ratified at Compiègne, 20th July 1753, Louis XV. authorised Gabriel to take advantage of all the designs. The "Place," with the equestrian statue of the King by Bouchardon, the ditches and balustrades abutting on to little pavilions to be crowned with statuary, and the decorative façades on the north side flanking the rue Royale, was the result (Plate 4).

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Let us now stand in the centre of this vast, open, and prophetic square to contemplate the transfiguration of an architectural masterpiece on the ever-changing site of all that is tragic in French history. The extension of the city westward, and the increase of traffic have necessitated a change of the old "Place," such that its original architectural conception is now difficult of comprehension except by the aid of old prints.

The place as it stands to-day is, from an architectural point of view, far too large, too much of a desert, but in the time of Gabriel it was more enclosed and harmoniously decorated. In the centre rose the symbolic equestrian bronze statue, by Bouchardon, of Louis XV. as a Roman emperor (Plate 5). This feature, about 22 feet high, was placed with the horse's head facing the Tuileries. At each corner of the pedestal were allegorical figures about 10 feet high, three of which were by Bouchardon and one by Pigalle, representing Peace, Prudence, Force, Justice. The which inspired the following malicious couplet :

"Oh ! la belle statue ! Oh ! le beau piédestal !
Les vertus sont à pied, le vice est à cheval !"

This masterpiece of the sculptor's art very naturally suffered the lot of many other royal statues. In 1792 the square was named "*Place de la Révolution*," and was one only of the many spots where the guillotine, each day at about 6 o'clock, did its bloody business. The file of tumbrels entered by the

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rue Royale. A published list gives the names of 2790 victims executed here. It was in the direction of the Champs-Élysées, near the present position of the world-renowned horse-tamers, by Coustou, brought from Marly, and placed here in 1795, where the King perished at a quarter past ten in the morning of Monday, 21st January 1793.

After the suppression of the guillotine, a pile of eighty-three lances, one for each of the departments of the Republic, was erected. Then the plaster work of Lemot, representing "La Liberté," was put up. It disappeared the following year. Finally, the obelisque from Luxor (six feet higher than Cleopatra's Needle), gift of Mohammed-Ali to Charles X., was erected in 1836 by the architect Lebas, and remains to this day as indifferent to party feelings (Plate 6).

In Gabriel's lay-out, two roads from the west entered the "Place," diagonally cutting the corners of the square, making an octagon, at the eight corners of which were placed little pavilions for groups of statuary, and bordering the "Place" were ditches surmounted by balustrades (Plates 4 and 7).

As late as 1835 there were people living in the ditches, which were filled up in 1852. The present form of the "Place" is due to the architect Hittorf, who was responsible for the two fountains dedicated to the seas and to the rivers, one on each side of the obelisque. As much out of place as the obelisque itself.

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The eight pavilions (or guérites) still exist with slight modifications, and are attributed to Gabriel. They are most attractive in proportion. In 1835 the Paris Municipal Council decided to order statues of the eight principal towns of France. The following four sculptors of renown were chosen: for Strasbourg and Lille, Pradier (Plate 7); for Marseilles and Lyons, Petitot; for Rouen and Brest, Cortot; for Nantes and Bordeaux, Callouet. On Gabriel's pavilions or pedestals these good but foreign-looking statues were placed. Unfortunately they have not that eighteenth-century "cachet" such as the sculpture of Bouchardon. It is to be regretted that the original idea was never completed.

The "Place de la Concorde" has been so altered and enlarged that practically nothing of Gabriel's scheme remains except the two magnificent façades, conceived as ornamental elevations to form a decorative background. They are the admiration of all visitors to the Capital, and are perhaps the best proportioned façades of their style to be found anywhere in the world. Gabriel also gave, as a part of the ensemble of the same composition, the design for the façades of the rue Royale, the buildings behind being designed subsequently, by any architect, according to the requirements of the time. A similar method of procedure was carried out by Mansard in the "Place Vendôme" necessitating in some cases rather awkward internal arrangements. Gabriel himself, for some time, had rooms in the rue Royale, now No. 8.

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The building on the left or west side of the "Place" was the first to be erected.

The foundation stone of the building or palace to the right of the rue Royale was laid in 1751, but the works were scarcely properly in hand before 1762. When completed it became the "Garde-Meuble de la Couronne." Marie Antoinette is said to have stayed here on a few occasions. It was on the first floor of this building that the minutes of the execution of Louis XVI. were drawn up. In 1791 it was occupied as a military position by the "insurgés," and only saved from a complete ruin by the arrival of the regular troops. In 1792 it became the "*Ministère de le Marine*," which name it retains to this day. It has some horrible rooms and some showy salons, with a mixture of good decoration of the epoch, and of additions from the time of Louis-Philippe. It is not safe to say that any of it is by Gabriel except the exquisite façade (Plate 8).

These two edifices recall in a striking manner Perrault's colonnade at the Louvre, upon which Gabriel was engaged in repairing. But how much more graceful is Gabriel's design than the naturalist's adaptation of Bernini's manner.

The details are light in treatment and of the most excellent finish. We can trace the trophies flanking the pediment and the garland-hung oval medallions to the Louis XIV. period, but they are treated in a way characteristic of what is called the Louis XVI. style (Plate 8). Together with

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the consoles these good but "mere" details are some of the motifs now greatly plagiarised by would-be imitators of the "Style Gabriel." From old prints we see that it was originally intended to fill the empty niches with sculpture. It is a pity that this was never carried out by some capable sculptor of the epoch.

It is worthy of mention, though a point bearing on technical criticism, that connoisseurs of architecture are interested in studying the proportion of the colonnades and of the arcades *separately*. After appreciating the relative heights and lengths of the two stories in question, it is observed, on generally accepted canons, that the intercolumniation appears too wide and the arcades too narrow, but when seen together the whole makes a most satisfactory compromise. The proportions of these façades are always pointed out to students in France, for it is universally recognised by experienced practitioners that they illustrate the genius of Gabriel, who has handled this particular difficulty, imposed by the adoption of the style, in a manner characteristic of a Master.

L'École Militaire (Plates 10 to 18). Acquaintance with the organised system of procedure, and the methods of design and decoration of Gabriel's architecture, all teach the same lesson, viz., they were the monarchical expression of the time. One of the finest buildings of its class in Europe is the École Militaire at Paris. It is only visited by special permission, and is too little known. It is of the greatest

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importance as a *Monumental* edifice. Another masterpiece of the Bourbon school of architecture.

In emulation of Madame de Maintenon, one of Louis XIV.'s mistresses, through whose instigation was built the Hôtel des Invalides, chef d'œuvre of the seventeenth century, by Bruant and Mansard, Madame de Pompadour was keen on handing down her name to posterity in a similar manner. By the aid of the financier Pâris-Duvernay, and of the army minister Le Comte d'Argenson, Madame de Pompadour saw in the scheme an excellent opportunity for the distraction of her "blasé" royal lover. The project was duly prepared by Pâris-Duvernay, and ratified by royal decree dated 13th January 1751. "We have decided (says the preamble of the decree) to found a military school for the education of 'cinq cents Gentilshommes' (noblemen) born without estate, and preferably those who have lost their fathers in war." It became a "Collège académique," a monument to the glory of French arms, and connected in principle, as well as by an avenue of trees, with the great military foundation of Louis XIV.

The central portion, called the "Château," with the royal court of the École Militaire, is a typical example of symmetrical composition (Plate 10). Details of planning being secondary to unity of conception.

Accepting the merits of the method, Gabriel resolved his problem with his usual success. The edifice has suffered

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the counter-blows of the Revolution, which lasted nearly a century. It was successively barracks, hospital, prison, and the chapel itself converted into a ball-room, canteen, store-house.

The École Militaire has often been severely treated by capable critics. It is certainly full of faults, against the sanity of architecture, which, if further developed, would ultimately bring the art to utter disrespect. The fault, a serious one, was not with Gabriel, but with his age. Let it be explained that when an architect is faced with a building problem, he not only has to consider it from a scientific, artistic, and financial point of view, but also from a social standpoint. A development of these factors constitutes what the French call the "programme."

It is evident that the prevailing fashion or culture of the time, irrespective of his own ideas, must play a powerful rôle especially on the social solution of the problem. By glancing at Plates 10 and 11 it will be seen that in classical renaissance architecture we have what is called the giant order (huge columns), an absolutely absurd feature apparently supporting floors in its middle with a huge capital merely bearing a superficial crowning set of decorative mouldings. Instead of æsthetic construction it is illogical ornamentation: the real building behind serving as an apology for its dressing. The "programme" demanded a theatrical effect and Gabriel supplied it, but with a deal of discretion that makes it almost

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noble. Nevertheless, the sin is there. In the chapel of this fine erection we also see jammed up in a corner the quarter of a column with three-quarters of a Corinthian capital apparently embedded in the wall. The chapel, again, from the outside has nothing of the character of a chapel, and looks as though it had a floor across the middle of its height (Plates 10 and 11). These and a few other inconsistencies are what the present age despise in renaissance architecture. It will be noticed that Gabriel's treatment of the orders in the façades of the Place de la Concorde shows his predilection for logical construction, but an architect is not an absolute monarch in the realms of architecture. Let us therefore be guided by what is most permanent in his work.

The foundation stone of the "Château" was laid in 1769. Gabriel was then seventy-one years of age. A statue of the King by Lemoine was placed in the centre of the "Cour Royale." Slodtz executed much of the delightful sculpture. The well-known ornamentalists, Liger, Verbeckt, Guibert, and Rousseau, were employed on the interior decoration (Plates 17 and 18).

Le Château de Compiègne (Plates 19 to 22). We now come to another aspect of the qualities of Gabriel's architecture and one bearing more directly on modern work. All lovers of the basic element of architecture, viz., *planning and construction*, appreciate Gabriel's handling of the problems at the palace of Compiègne. It is his solution of the difficulties rather than the ornamental details that appeals to architects.

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They are threefold. 1. Extensive additions to an existing "château." 2. A difference of site levels. 3. A triangular plan. The whole to be royal in aspect and part of a town planning scheme joining the life of the town with the sport of the forest.

As far back as the reign of Charles V. in 1374 there existed a "château" on this site about a third of the size of the present one. From the time of Charles VII. (1422-61) nearly all the kings of France regaled themselves at this "château." Louis XIV., who had not the predilections of his ancestors for this residence, and who said, "At Versailles I am housed like a King, at Fontainebleau like a Prince, at Compiègne like a Peasant," nevertheless had rooms built on facing the forest.

In 1738 Louis XV. entrusted Jacques Gabriel (father) with the works of a total reconstruction of the palace, but Ange-Jacques Gabriel was the real "ordonnateur," who succeeded his father in 1742.

Without entering further into the history of the edifice, attention might be drawn to the arrangement of the square court of honour facing the town (Plate 20), with the long façade facing the forest (Plate 19). The latter is not parallel with any face of the court but is almost parallel with its diagonal, necessitating difficult internal arrangements of the rooms. It is so cleverly masked that any ordinary visitor to the palace would scarcely notice the change of

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axis. The solution of this plan is one of the typical examples that all advanced students of the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, make a point of studying.

Louis XV.'s scheme was often interrupted through lack of funds. Its partial completion, for it was never finished, lasted for nearly fifty years. Gabriel was succeeded by the architect Le Dreux, who was supposed to carry out his predecessor's ideas. To say now what was Gabriel and what was Le Dreux is a matter for pundits. Of course the main scheme was preserved, and that was Gabriel's. It is large, simple, and majestic.

The tasteful double colonnaded screen across the court of honour is worthy of the reputation of Gabriel (Plates 20 and 21). This screen, a charming piece of architecture, is only a part of the original conception for the decorative treatment of the "Place du Palais." There was to have been two hôtels on the other side of the Place, opposite and similar to the two pavilions now existing, and these were to have been connected by colonnades similar to the one erected.

The Palace of Compiègne, like all royal palaces in France, is no longer a living model. It is a museum!

Le Château de Versailles (Plates 23 to 27). Gabriel's work at this "château" is of the greatest interest. As "premier architecte du roi," he directed many alterations and decorative schemes, such as the bedroom for Louis XV. and the library of Louis XVI., etc. These are easy of

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comprehension, and are admirably carried out with the usual good taste characteristic of his guidance (Plate 26). What is not so well understood, and which characterises him as an architect before an archæologist, are the strong personal wings, called by some "*Les Ailes Gabriel*." They have been much abused by popular writers, casual observers, and inexperienced art critics, who have ventured to say that these "Ailes Gabriel" are a mistake which seriously mar the uniformity of the whole as seen from the "Avant Cour." In their present unfinished state they do, but, instead of being a mistake, they were, together with other buildings, destined to bring about that uniformity so much desired.

It should be remembered that they are but an extremely small part of a huge scheme never accomplished, and which goes by the name of "*Le Grand Projet*."

The palace, a series of additions in different ages, has a front of a little less than 2000 feet in length, composed of three immense "corps de bâtiments," with the famous "Cour de Marbre" in the central "corps" deeply recessed from the town side. The composition was never finished, and unity of conception never attained.

It had its origin in a hunting "château" built by Louis XIII. Under Louis XIV. it became the official residence of the court, necessitating great extensions, but the King obstinately refused, out of consideration for his father, to allow the quaint aspect of the "Cour de Marbre" to be altered.

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Therein lies the whole secret of the fault against the uniformity. To go back to a style with which the architects had no sympathy and less experience was not the method of the time. The "Château" had outgrown itself, and there was an evolution of taste towards classic purity. The architecture of this homely-looking court, called by Blondel semi-gothic, was suitable for an early seventeenth-century hunting box, but it is fragmentary, and composed of an assemblage of small details illogically designed, bearing nothing of the stamp of palatial architecture.

Under Louis XV., Gabriel was ordered to prepare a scheme for the unification of the three "corps de bâtiments," but owing to financial difficulties it was only begun. His scheme, unfortunately, necessitated the demolition of the much admired "Escalier des Ambassadeurs," chef d'œuvre of Lebrun, which took up too much room and was badly placed. Had Gabriel's scheme been completed, it would have given more accommodation and would have been a great improvement to the town side of the Palace. All the great architects from the time of Mansard to Percier and Fontaine had the ambition of terminating the "Château de Versailles." Gabriel was not a man to treat the charming picturesqueness of the "Cour de Marbre" with the beguiled indulgence of a curator's dilettantism, for his client required a royal residence, not a museum! It was proposed to do away with this jarring note of the composition, and, by the use of two interior courts,

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to gain double the thickness for the central body of the palace and to erect a monumental central feature with a dome.

"L'Aile Gabriel" was designed for a monumental staircase of double evolution to serve the King's apartments and the big wing to the right with the Chapel and the Opera. In the "Aile Gabriel" we can still see the huge staircase cage, which during the time of Louis XVI. was used as a theatre. It is now called "La Salle des Débris Décoratifs" (Plate 27).

Arbitrary expressions of personal likes and dislikes, unless based upon a complete knowledge of the "programme," are idle and valueless as criticism. The pavilion facing the "Avant Cour," and more particularly the side elevation to the Cour Royale of the "Aile Gabriel" (Plate 27), is generally accepted, in itself, as technically good architecture of its style. Judgment on its adoption should be made after a study of "*Le Grand Projet*."

"*Le Petit Trianon*" (Plates 28 to 34). A most fascinating aspect of Gabriel's work was the playful simplicity of his "Ermitages." He built several, notably at Fontainebleau and at Compiègne, but the best and most widely known is the exquisite little royal country residence close to the Palace of Versailles known by the above name. This aristocratic abode for women, popularly associated with the life of Marie Antoinette, is a marvel of elegance and good taste, perhaps the best piece of "Boudoir" architecture ever erected.

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It has been copied times without number. America is full of little Trianons. It was built from the designs of Gabriel between 1762 and 1768, being ordered by Louis XV. for Madame de Pompadour, who in 1764 died before its completion. The King presented it later to his next official mistress, the newly created Comtesse du Barry, a fine creature with blue eyes, a delicious mouth, lovely features, and silky fair hair. She was originally a shop girl employed by Labille, "marchand de modes," rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, where she was known as Mademoiselle Jeanne Vaubernier.

She holds a great place in the memories of "Le Petit Trianon," renowned for their suppers which passed for orgies, upon which history, in default of details, remains silent. During the "Terreur," 1793, the harmless Madame du Barry was decapitated in front of Gabriel's façade in the "Place de la Concorde."

When the King died, regretted by no one, in 1774, she left the court never to return. The young Queen then begged Louis XVI. to give her the small "château" as a country house to which she could retire free from the "étiquette" of the court. The King is reported to have made on this occasion the following gallant remark, "Madame, ces beaux lieux ont toujours été le séjour des favorites des rois; ils doivent donc être le vôtre." Marie Antoinette seems to have amused herself like a child at this spot. She was haughty, ignorant, and frivolous, had practically no taste for art, except light

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music, but was passionately fond of fêtes. She played at the simple life, destroyed much of Gabriel's lay-out of Trianon, spoilt the splendid botanical gardens of Bernard de Jussieu, and built a toy farm, where she aped the milkmaid. Poor Marie Antoinette, she had too much influence for her own safety. Turgot, the great financial reformer, who might have saved the monarchy, but who endeavoured to curb the extravagant caprices of the Queen, was sent out of office, more by her personal dislike than by any judgment of the King. Such was the effeminate state of society into which France had descended, and for which the art of the time catered remarkably well.

The little palace in question is a gem, square in plan, with the garden level a floor higher than the level of the court of honour (Plates 28 and 29). It is renowned for elegant proportion, and in architecture sums up the whole spirit of the age. Two of the garden elevations are, in design, roughly double squares (Plates 29). The sculpture is delicate and exquisitely executed, with a conscientiousness on the part of the craftsmen to push the artistic expression of design to the point of perfection.

It has been criticised as being more of a jewel than a building. Some of the stone carving on the exterior would certainly be more appropriate, from a masculine point of view, for interior wood work, but men were only supposed to go there upon invitation. The building is a masterpiece.

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The interior is seductive and speaks its purpose. The staircase is more than worthy of attention. On the first floor is the dining-room, which is not of the time of Marie Antoinette, but was carried out under the supervision of Gabriel for Madame du Barry (Plates 33 and 34). The decoration is eminently suitable with garlands, trophies of love, etc. We feel we are in the house of a Queen of Beauty. The destiny of this shrine to Venus is everywhere apparent. Fruits and flowers are discretely carved. Above the doors, among vine branches, two chimera place their feet upon a well-filled bowl (Plates 33 and 34). This latter ornamentation in its artistic handling betrays a certain cold precision bespeaking the advent of the Empire style, and represents Gabriel's last phase.

The octagonal "Pavillon Français," just opposite the garden elevation of the Petit Trianon, is also by Gabriel (1749-50), but is pure Louis XV. style and represents his second phase (Plate 3). The Petit Trianon, however, though completely finished six years before the accession of Louis XVI., is justly cited as one of the finest examples of Gabriel's third phase—called Louis XVI. architecture.

In conclusion, Gabriel was a supervisor in whom authority was vested by right of birth from a too rich aristocracy, but not a society of "nouveaux riches."

His architecture harmonises with the other arts of his day. Were it possible to raise the dead, the lively Madame

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du Barry would be moved to laughter at the incongruity of a reception of ladies in a Modern Petit Trianon.

The tradition of "Le Style Gabriel" utterly ceased when the ill-fated Louis Capet and the hated "Autrichienne" expiated the crimes of the "Régime." "Le grand Architecte, c'est l'état social." Gabriel's architecture claims our deepest admiration, but we are living under a changed "état social" and science has advanced.

Renaissance pageantry is dying but the classic qualities of the Master remain for all time. His mortal remains were deposited in the church of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois about a century and a half ago. He passed away on the 4th January 1782, at 10 o'clock in the evening, in the rue des Orties, Paris. In memory of his achievements a street leading into the "Place de la Concorde" has been named the "Avenue Gabriel."



PLATE 2, 2nd *1/2* iss. PALACE OF VERSAILLES: PANEL, LOUIS XV. ROOMS.



PLATE 3. *2nd Phase.* PAVILLON FRANÇAIS (1749-50), VERSAILLES.



PLATE 5. PLACE LOUIS XV., PARIS, WITH STATUE BY BOUCHARDON. FROM PAINTING BY
J. LE PRINCE (1734-81). (MUSÉE DE BESANÇON.)



PLATE 6. PLACE DE LA CONCORDE, PARIS, PRESENT DAY.



PLATE 7. GUÉRÎTE (PAVILION), PLACE DE LA CONCORDE, PARIS.



PLATE 8. MINISTÈRE DE LA MARINE, PARIS. (PLACE DE LA CONCORDE.)



PLATE 9. MINISTÈRE DE LA MARINE, PARIS; PEDIMENT TO THE RIGHT. (REPARATION, 1924.)



PLATE 10. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; THE "CHÂTEAU" AND THE COURT OF HONOUR.
(CHAPEL IMMEDIATELY ON RIGHT OF CENTRAL FEATURE.)



PLATE II. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; CENTRAL FEATURE TO "CHAMP DE MARS" CHAPEL ON LEFT, WITH FALSE WINDOWS NEAR GROUND.

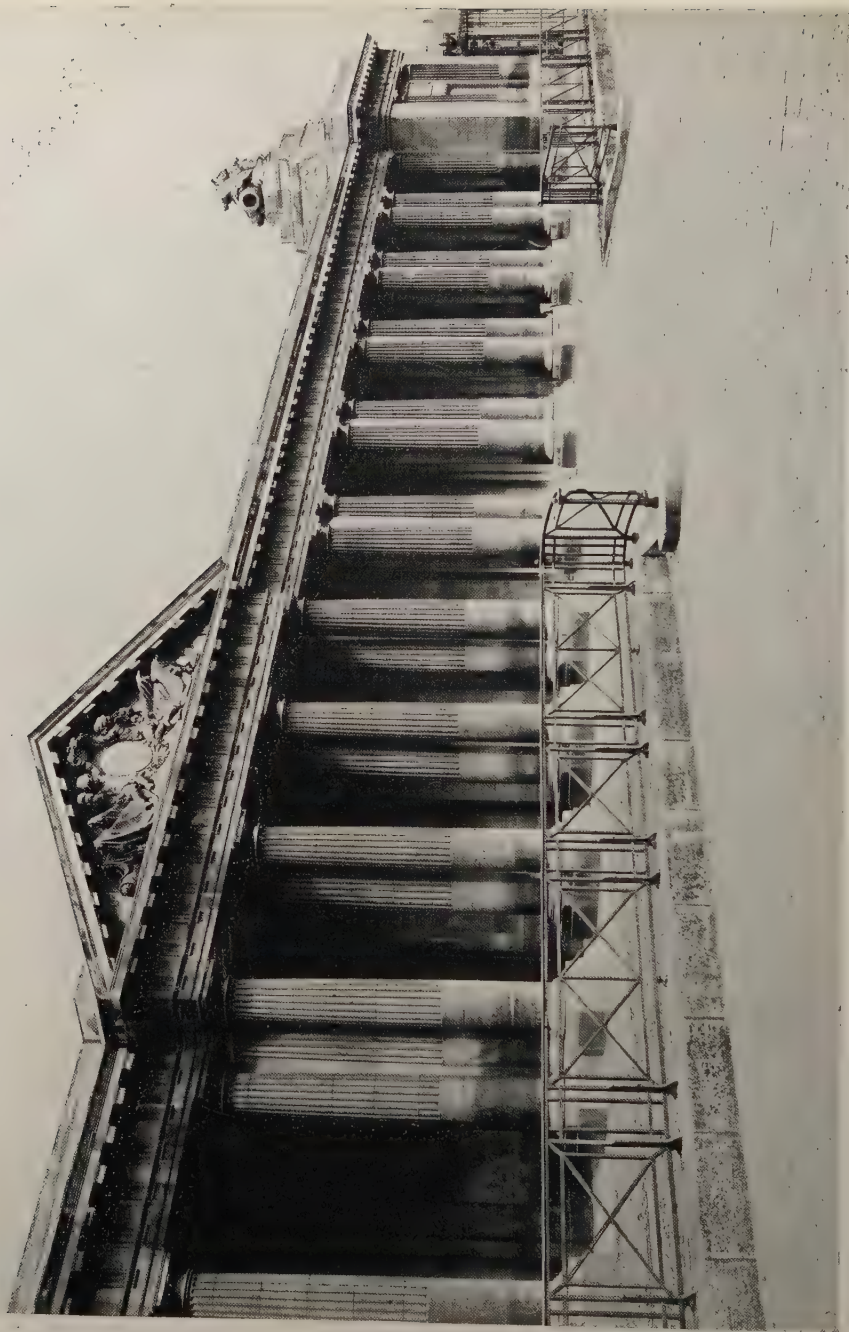


PLATE 12. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; COLONNADE, COURT OF HONOUR.



PLATE 13. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; GUARD-HOUSES.

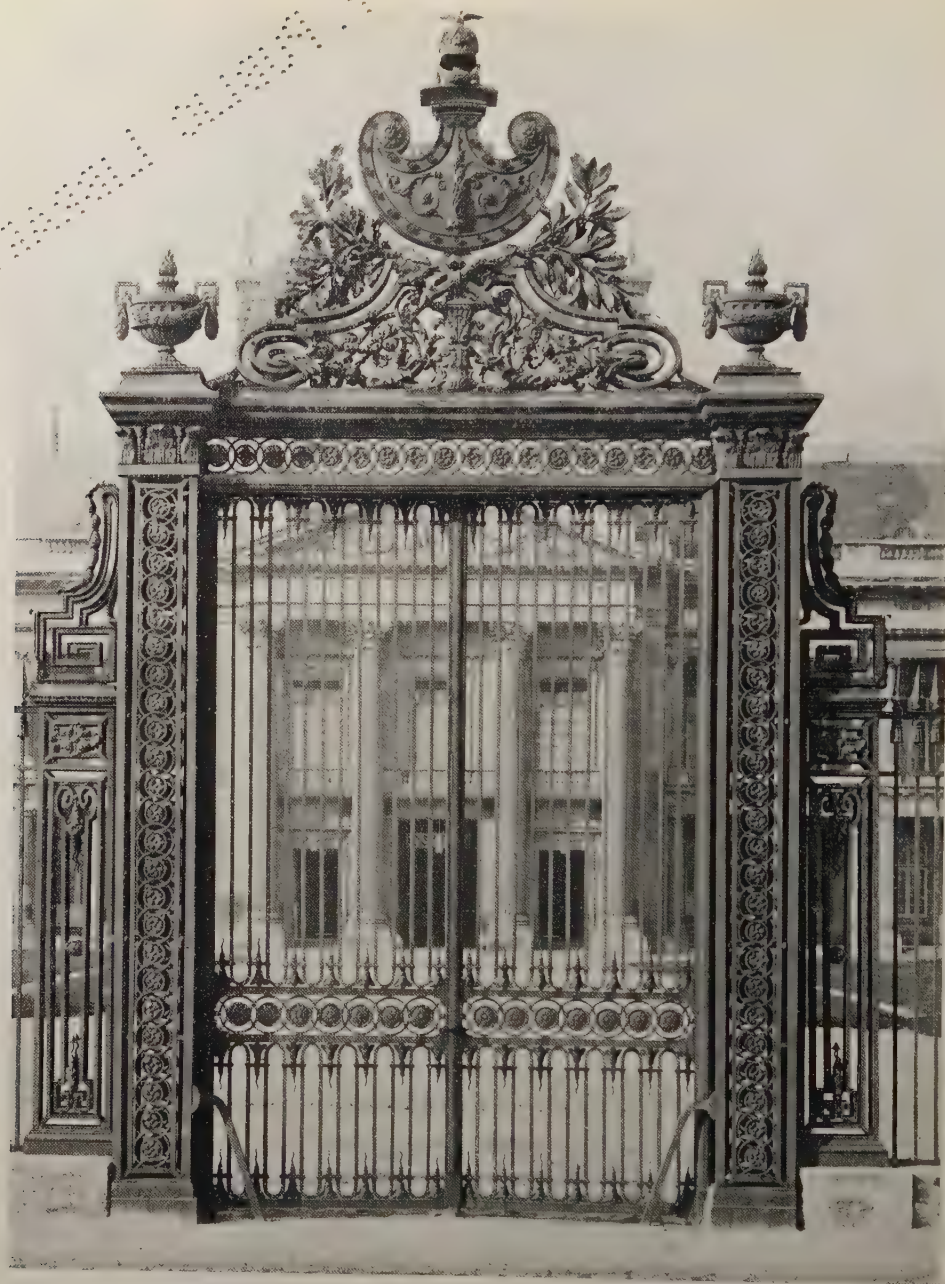


PLATE 14. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; IRON RAILING, ENTRANCE TO COURT OF HONOUR.

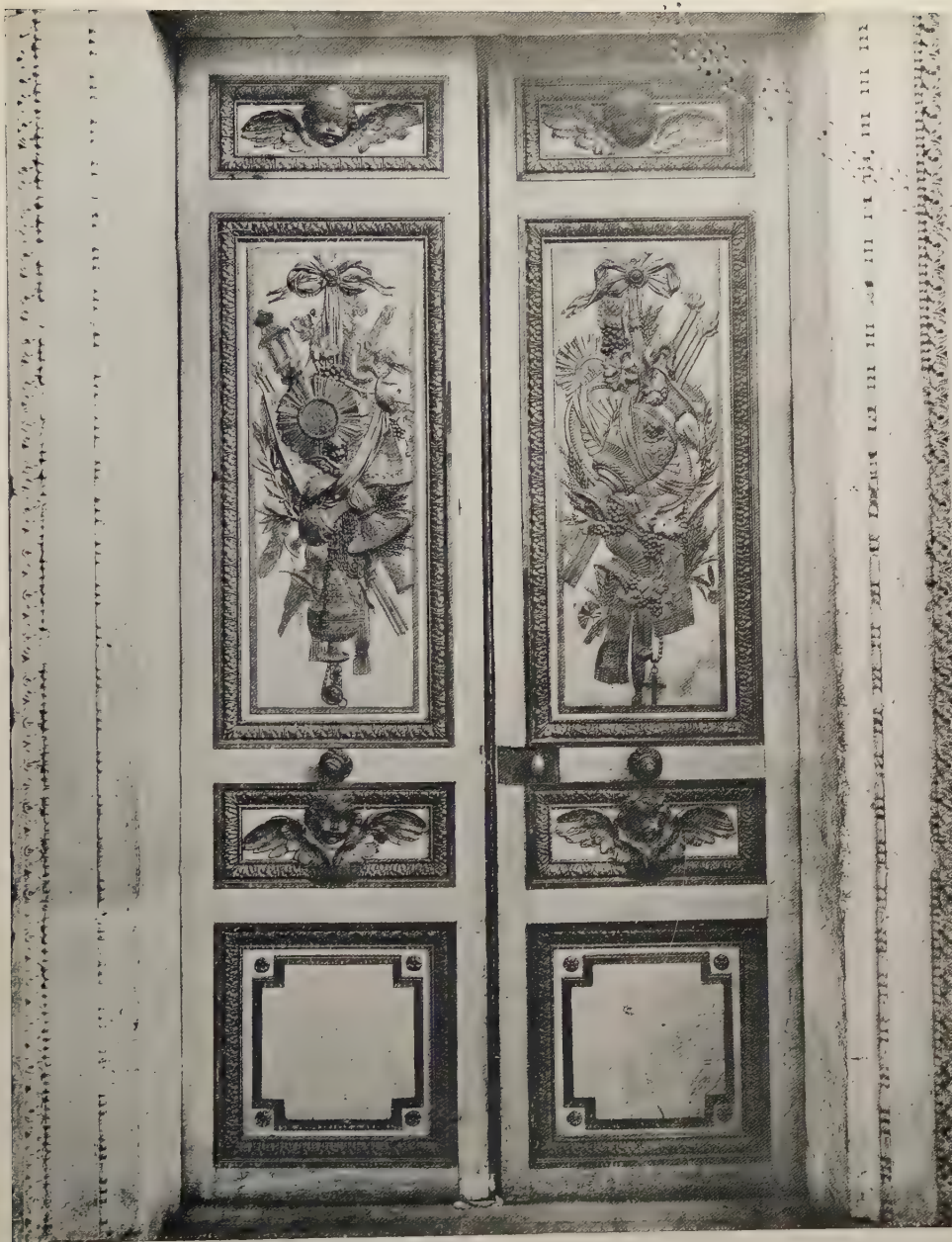


PLATE 15. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; DOOR IN CHAPEL.



PLATE 16. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; STAIRCASE.

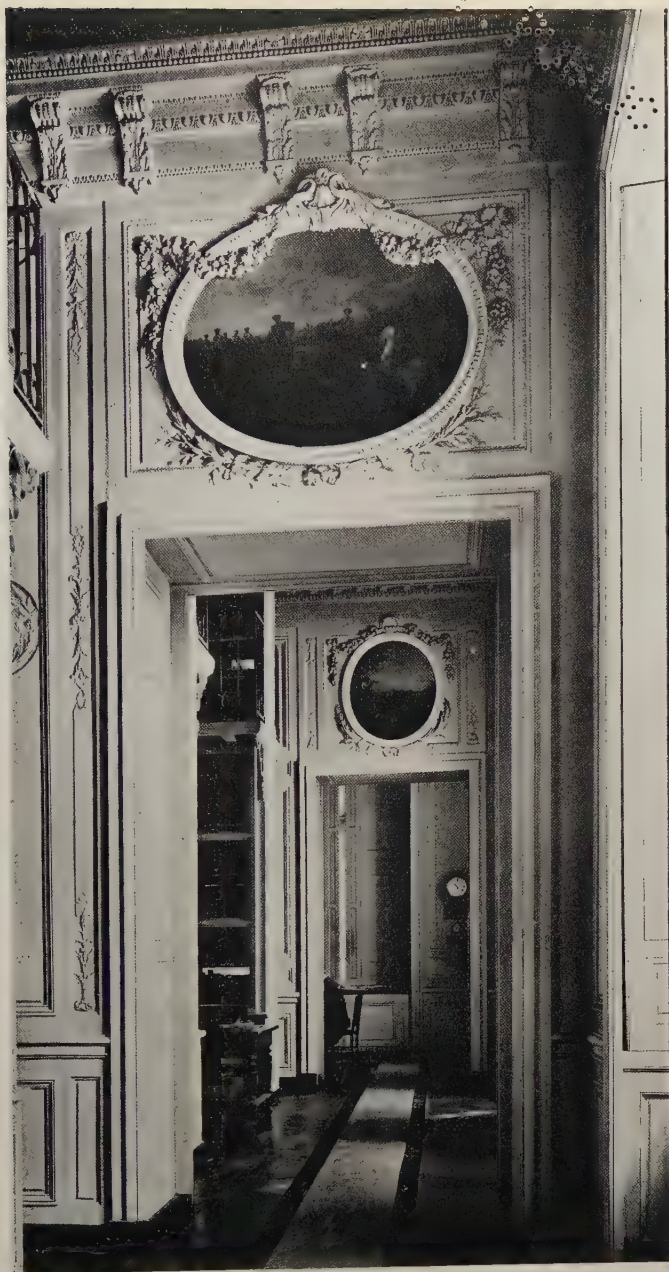


PLATE 17. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; THE LIBRARY.

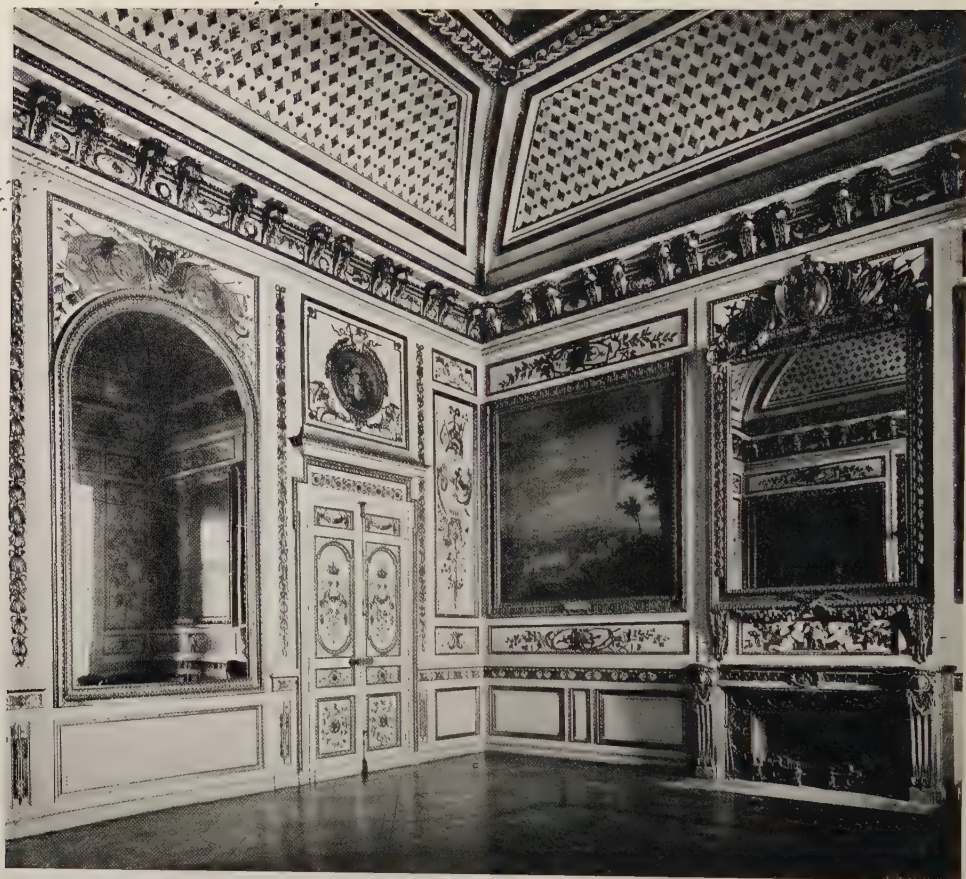


PLATE 18. L'ÉCOLE MILITAIRE, PARIS; SALON DES MARÉCHAUX.



PLATE 19. PALACE OF COMPIÈGNE ; FAÇADE TO THE FOREST. RAMP IN CENTRE CONSTRUCTED
BY NAPOLEON.



PLATE 20. PALACE OF COMPIÈGNE; PAVILIONS, COURT OF HONOUR, SCREEN.
(FACADE TO THE TOWN.)



PLATE 21. PALACE OF COMPIÈGNE; DETAIL OF SCREEN TO
COURT OF HONOUR.



PLATE 22. PALACE OF COMPIÈGNE; ESCALIER D'APOLLON, HAND-RAILING
(LOUIS XV.).

ATTRIBUTED TO GABRIEL, AS WELL AS THE NEWLY DISCOVERED NICHE.

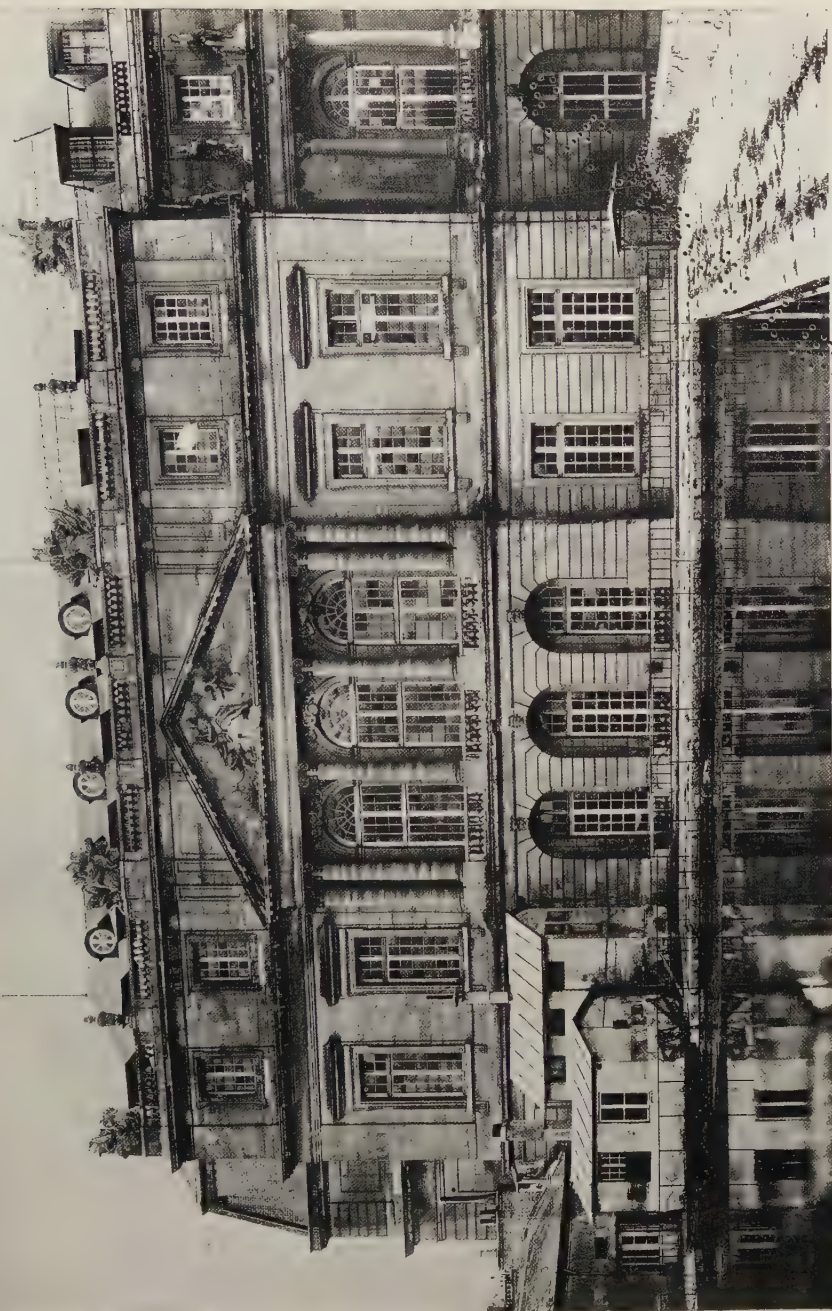


PLATE 23. PALACE OF VERSAILLES; EXTERIOR OF OPERA.



PLATE 24. PALACE OF VERSAILLES; INTERIOR OF OPERA.

*Manuscript
Bibliothèque du Roy aux Vaux de Versailles. Grande Appartenance.
par D. de Chambray.
fait à Paris le 24 Juin 1774. Gabriel.*

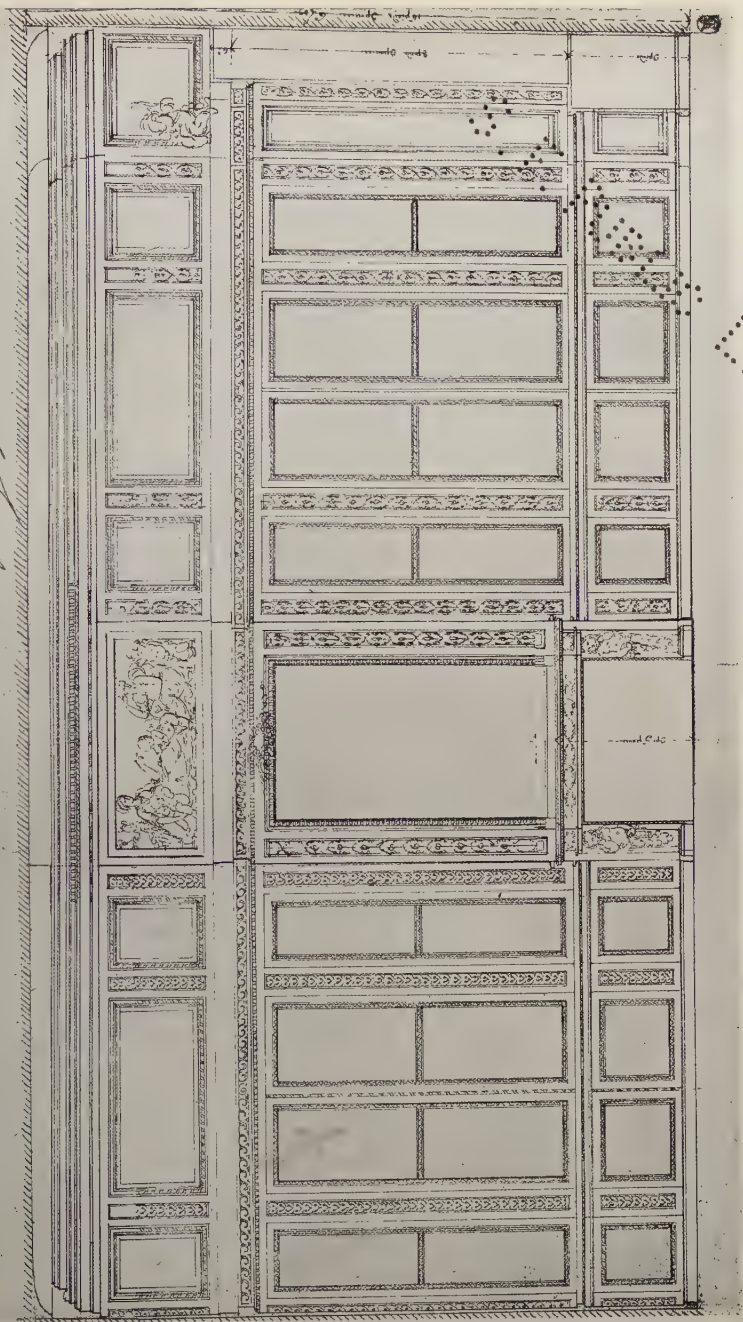


PLATE 25. PALACE OF VERSAILLES; THE KING'S LIBRARY. DRAWING OF EXECUTED WORK SIGNED BY
GABRIEL, 1774, AT THE AGE OF SEVENTY-SIX.

COLLECTION OF MONSIEUR GROSSEVRE.



PLATE 26. PALACE OF VERSAILLES; ROOM CALLED LOUIS XVI.'S LIBRARY.



PLATE 27. PALACE OF VERSAILLES; L'AILE GABRIEL. FAÇADE TO THE
"COUR ROYALE."



PLATE 28. LE PETIT TRIANON; FAÇADE TO THE COURT OF HONOUR.

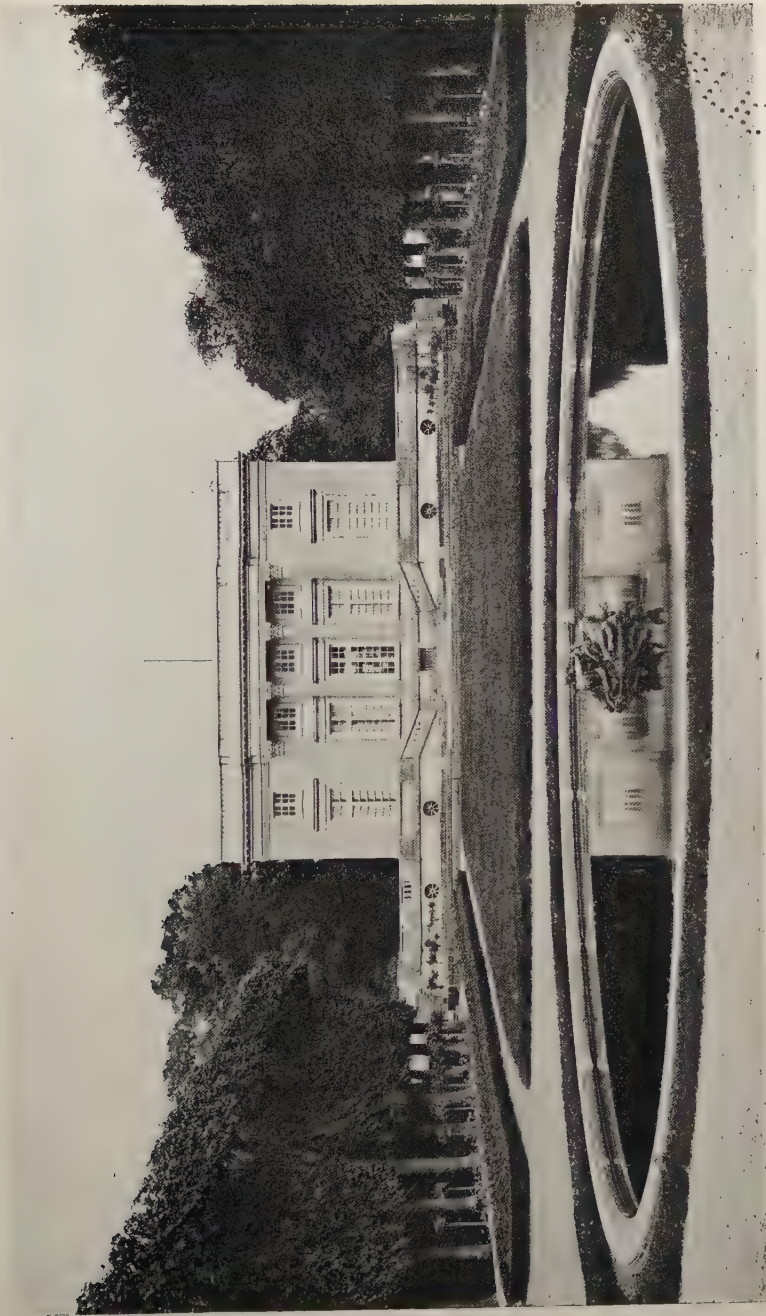


PLATE 29. LE PETIT TRIANON ; FAÇADE TO THE FRENCH GARDEN.



PLATE 30. LE PETIT TRIANON ; DETAIL OF GARDEN STAIRCASE.



PLATE 31. LE PETIT TRIANON ; THE "GRAND SALON."

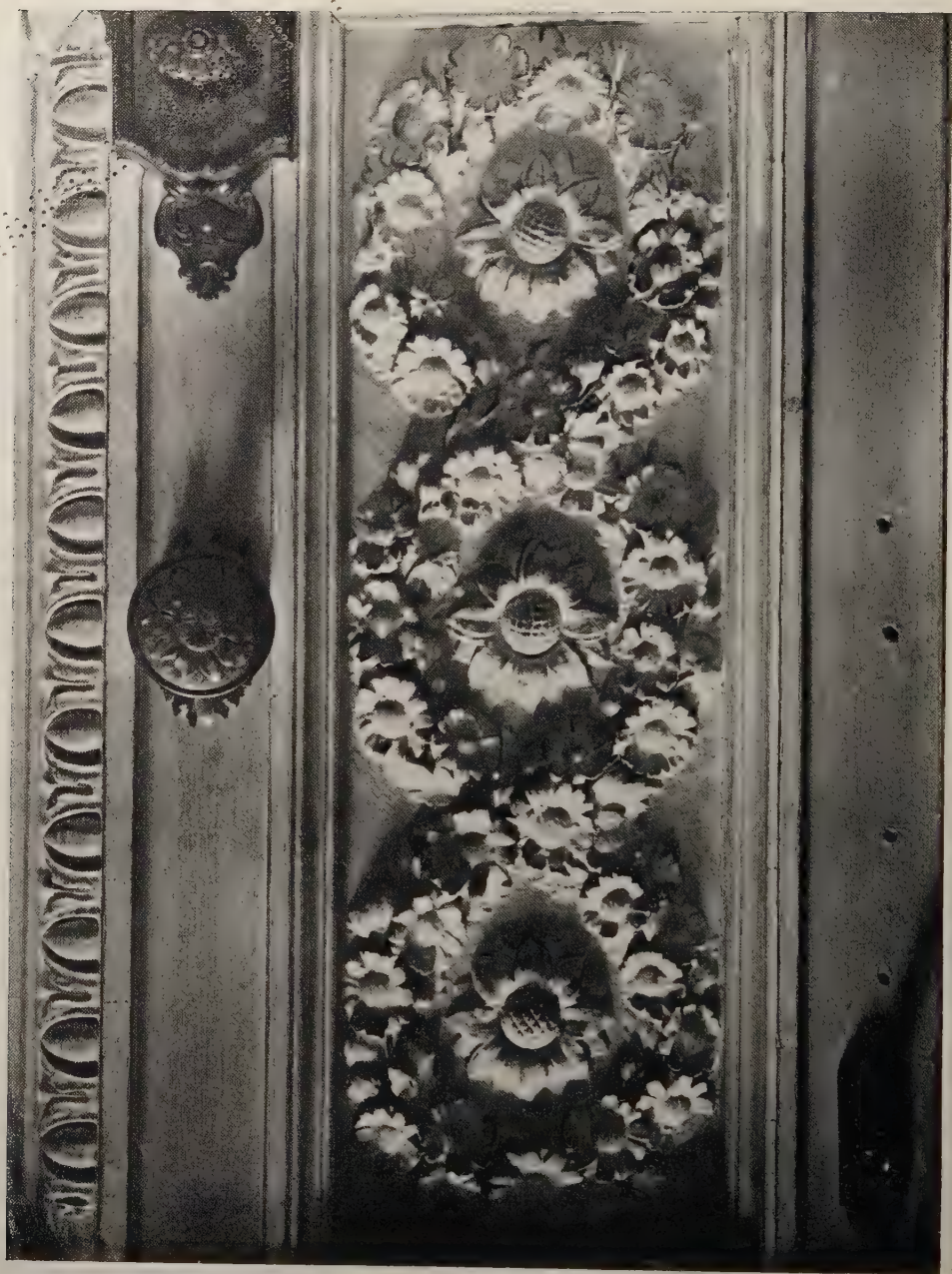


PLATE 32. LE PETIT TRIANON : THE "GRAND SALON." DETAIL OF PANEL TO DOOR.



PLATE 33. 4th Phase. PETIT TRIANON; DINING ROOM.



PLATE 34. 4th Phase. DETAIL OF PLATE 33.

PL 16
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